

UPDATE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE GREATER SEATTLE VIETNAM ASSOCIATION

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Editor, Dwight Davis

The Greater Seattle Vietnam Association
invites members and friends to our

VÀO HẠ Passage into Summer Bar-B-Que

Come out and meet other members and allow us to update you on all the exciting events and projects we're working on. Meat and veggie dishes will be provided at this casual get together, and the Board of Directors will provide tasty salads and treats.

Sunday, June 9th, from 4 to 7 pm.
Centennial Plaza, 2515 4th Avenue, 2nd floor
(In Belltown)

Hopes for a Forward Looking Museum

Vietnam's National Assembly has approved creation of a new National Museum of Natural History in Hanoi, and the Director of the Burke Museum in Seattle is hoping it can have a role in the project. Last February Burke Director Karl Hutterer met Dang Vu Minh director of Vietnam's National Center of Natural Sciences and Technology, who was in Seattle with the Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Khanh. Hutterer said Minh invited him to submit ideas for planning the new project. The first job of a museum of natural history is to collect and preserve species. Hutterer said Minh wants the facility to be much more. He believes it should develop the resources of biological sciences to study the distribution of species and monitor the environment. Hutterer would include the social sciences. "I want to push this. You can't understand environmental issues without considering the implications of human activity, by both Vietnamese and non-Vietnamese."

According to Hutterer, thousands of unidentified species, especially insects and plant life, may be still be discovered in Vietnam. These, along with other species already recorded, may be threatened by the widescale development taking place there. For instance, a new dam may threaten the survival of plants with potential pharmaceutical value. He pointed out that a unknown species of mammal, a deer, was found in recent years in the hills of northern Vietnam.

Hutterer proposes that the new museum establish an education center, dedicated to maintenance of ecological balance for generations to come. "Most people

look at museums and think of the past, but we also want to be forward looking." In addition, Hutterer proposes collaborations of several kinds, including "back and forth" collaborations between Seattle and Hanoi. He also hopes the Vietnamese institution can establish links with other countries of Asia. He said studies of ecology need an "unfettered approach."

Research links have already been made on watershed dynamics in Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and southern China. "A very rich exchange of opinions and ideas is in progress," he said, and Vietnam is slowly becoming a partner in the regional investigations.

Another part of Hutterer's plan would provide for a training program at the University of Washington for preparing Vietnamese staff for the new museum. Staff and managers of museums in Africa, Tonga and Borneo already have trained at Burke. The Seattle scholar said environmental preservation is a historically new ideology. Formerly, ideological movements always supported the conquest of natural resources, leaving a humanly controlled landscape. Ancient peoples or groups living in cultural isolation typically abused the natural environment, but only on a small scale. He remembered observing hunters and gatherers in Borneo. "If you find a tree in fruit, cut down the branches to get at the fruit." No one thought of protecting the tree. But this is changing. Now industrialized western nations are not the only ones concerned about destruction of species. Hutterer noted that in recent times, for example, Buddhists in Thailand have supported new policies for protection of the environment.

State Trade Official Helps Protect Environment

A new specialist on the team that helps promote foreign trade for the State of Washington brings with her a wealth of experience among Vietnamese people and a strong concern about environmental issues. As a U.S. Foreign Service officer, Alison Krupnick was given a year of full-time private studies in the Vietnamese language. Then she was assigned to Ho Chi Minh City for four years to interview candidates for the U.S. Government's orderly departure program. She was part of a group who interviewed and passed judgment on applicants for visas to the United States. Her unit processed an average 10,000 applications a month. These were people in the south who did not get preferential treatment for quick processing just before or just after Ho Chi Minh City fell in 1975, or did not leave surreptitiously by boat in the months or years afterwards.

They were in three categories: Family reunification cases; Amerasians, and people released after three years or longer in reeducation camps. Complications called for compassionate, creative approaches. Krupnick created a special program, for instance, to help people who were apparently stuck in refugee camps but had close relatives still in Vietnam who were near the top of the list qualified for visas to the U.S. Krupnick said individuals in the camps could be included in the application of their relatives back home. She and her colleagues traveled to several camps throughout the region locating prospective individuals and informing them about their rights. It was not easy. To be considered as part of a family group, the refugee must first return to Vietnam to rejoin the family. Some candidates would not go, fearing recriminations at home. Krupnick said neighbors or family members often resent a returned refugee. There may be an unrealistic feeling, she said, that the refugee lived a comfortable life while the people at home endured hardships.

Back in Washington, D.C., Krupnick decided she was ready to resign from the Foreign Service and settle down in Seattle where she had a close friend, who is now her husband. Her new job is program manager for emerging markets with the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development. "Washington State is recognized as a leader in the technology of environmental protection," she said, which was one of her own personal commitments. She said she hopes to spend more time facilitating environmental programs for Vietnam. She said that for now, however, people there must consider these projects a luxury. Her recent assignments have been focused on other places in Asia. She has created a program for bringing delegates from Asia to Washington State for demonstrations of new practical techniques for processing solid wastes. In addition, she has set up a project to allow five Washington companies to take part in a trade fair in July in Singapore, where they will have a chance to introduce various anti-pollution technology to about 10,000 potential users.

Pen Pals Meet Through Their Letters

An exchange of letters and pictures has begun between the children of Seattle and the children of Haiphong has begun. In the project created by the GSVA Education Committee, about 30 letters from Vietnamese children have been translated and delivered to Dearborn elementary school and others. The same number of contributions by the Seattle children are being processed for delivery to an orphanage in Haiphong. Translations have been made by GSVA members and friends.

Committee chair Beth Whitman says she hopes to find a suitable public place in Seattle to display some of the letters.

Greater Seattle Vietnam Association

A grassroots, non-profit, duly incorporated and registered organization dedicated to helping the people of Seattle Create and maintain links with the people of Vietnam.

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Vietnamese Excited To Be Participating In The Olympic Games:

Vietnam will be sending a small but enthusiastic team of athletes to the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta according to the Olympic Liaison Office in Atlanta. The team will consist of 5 athletes and 3 coaches. They Vietnamese will compete in Track and Field, Swimming, and Marksmanship.

U.W Social Work Faculty Plans Vietnam Trip

A faculty team from the School of Social Work at the University of Washington is planning a trip to Hanoi in September. The purpose is to introduce social workers, academics and government leaders there to methods used in the U.S. for creating effective social services. One emphasis will be on the role of a university in training professional social workers to help communities understand and solve various social problems. In the U.S. these problems are usually assigned to trained professional social workers. This is not the custom in Vietnam. A professor of social work at the University of Washington in Seattle, Dr. Hy Resnick, will lead the U.S. group. He traveled to Vietnam last year as a member of Governor Lowry's trade mission and consulted many Vietnamese social workers, students and university faculty in Hanoi, Haiphong and Ho Chi Minh City about the possibility of exchanges of programs and ideas. He said people he met were eager to learn about the university-based perspective in these matters, and his group hopes to learn more about how social problems are addressed by Vietnamese communities.

Resnick created the new project in collaboration with Dr. Cuong, Director of Policy and Research at the National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities in Hanoi. The American group, which will include five to ten members, will tour various facilities in northern Vietnam, take part in a seminar with Vietnamese government representatives, social workers and faculty persons, and then conduct a 4-day educational program with skills workshops, lectures and exchanges. Resnick said, "Our attitudes and practices in the field of social work are both similar and different from the traditional ways of helping in a socialist country. Both cultures respond to the needs of disadvantaged people in their communities with compassion. Our system differs from theirs mainly because we rely to a large extent to people trained in an academic discipline to work as

professional social workers. I think we'll all gain from sharing our perspective outlooks." Resnick said the U.S. faculty making the trip are paying their own expenses and donating their services. He said he would be happy to talk with any readers who want more information or who would like to help pay expenses of the Vietnamese participants. Resnick may be reached at 543-8314.

California Group To Bring Golf to Haiphong

Reports from Hanoi say a California investment group has signed a joint venture agreement for a golf resort near Haiphong. The 18-hole golf course would be part of a large tourist complex near the coastal town of Do Son, the picturesque region popular with the French in colonial days. The area is south of Haiphong, on the same side of the city as the site for the new one billion dollar deep water port at Dinh Vu peninsula.

The U.S. investors are the California Investment Group, Ltd. Their representative, Liem Le, told Reuters news agency that the project is budgeted for \$53 million. His corporation will contribute 65 percent of the capital, and Haiphong City will contribute 35 percent. Work is scheduled to start later in this year. It is expected that the project will be developed in six 1-year phases. The resort would include 150 villas, a hotel and small commercial center. Another group, Daewoo of South Korean, and its Vietnamese partner also plan to open a golf course and country club outside Hanoi in mid-1997.

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Last summer, in Washington
I saw the black wall
My shadow reflected
the names of faceless men.
I traced the ruins
carved in stone but did not find
Mother's name
or the names of other women
who stood against the wall of a temple
garden, parting leaves, weeping
napalm tears
 Sandalwood incense
 sweet crooked smoke
they drove all things
out of mind.

Excerpts from "Mother's Pearls" by Bao-Long Chu
Once Upon A Dream.....